

Tonto Basin Community Minutes

Tuesday July 2, 2019

- Supervisor discussed his recent activities
- Supervisor gave out Public Works Update for June
- At our last meeting an incident was brought up regarding dogs being poisoned. We reached out to Gila County Animal Control and received the following response:

We get this rumor going around a couple times a year. It's really hard to actually poison an animal anymore because they have taken out the ingredients that make dogs and or cats want to eat it. Now if someone has put out rat or mouse poison which is pretty common in the Tonto Basin area, and a cat or dog finds that dead rat or mouse and eats it, it could be poisoned from consuming that dead animal.

- At our last meeting a resident asked why the County no longer managed the transfer station in Tonto Basin. We received this answer from Steve Sanders, director of Public Works:

The County closed transfer stations in 2005. The Landfill Dept. is designated as an enterprise fund. That means the landfill department has to operate from tipping fees. A tipping fee is the fee people pay to bring trash to the landfills. The transfer stations had been operating in the red for a number of years. By 2005 commercial trash haulers had begun to provide services to Roosevelt, Tonto Basin, Gisela, and Young. That gave residents the option of having someone collect their trash and not being dependent on transfer stations. The Board of Supervisors didn't want to compete with private enterprise and to continue to operate the transfer stations would have resulted in a large fee increase to the residents using the facility. The Board of Supervisors made the decision to sell the equipment from the transfer stations to the commercial trash haulers in the area and close the transfer stations in Roosevelt, Tonto Basin, Gisela, and Young.

- Freeport McMoRan will be resuming operations at the Patullo Quarry Pit off Hwy 188. Hours will be from 6 AM to 5 PM, Monday through Friday. There will be periodic blasting.
- Interviews have been filmed with residents regarding their experience with the Tonto Creek flooding. We are wrapping up the BUILD Grant application for 2019.
- Handouts - TestIT, Discover Gila County website, Red Cross volunteers, Project A.C.E. all children eat.

Animal Control – Anthony from Payson Animal Control

Anthony let residents know it is very difficult for someone to poison pets. Poisons now have a bitter flavor added to them to discourage animals from consuming them. Anthony asked residents if they had any complaints. One resident asked that Animal Control patrol Escondido Road as there are dogs there that chase vehicles.

Carl Melford – Gila County Emergency Manager

Carl let residents know that in the past the County did do supply runs during flooding. However, Emergency Management is now funded by the State and in order for supply runs to be made the area must truly be flooded with no access other than over water. As long as A Cross is passible, the area is not considered flooded in. A resident asked Carl how they could utilize Emergency Services. Carl let them know that they first call the Sheriff's Department who has a list of grocery stores and pharmacies that work with the County. They would then call their order

in to the store or pharmacy and prepay. A deputy would pick up medications and delivery them. An Emergency Management staff member would arrange to deliver the groceries. No mail can be delivered by either the Sheriff's Department or Emergency Management. Carl also let folks know that even if the do not have helicopter insurance, they would be flown out in the event of a medical emergency. Carl updated resident on the Woodbury Fire, the fire is currently 80% contained. The USFS Range Team is looking at the land that has burned and will determine is any of it is still in a condition for permittees to graze cattle on. Upon determination, some permits may be pulled for 3 to 5 years to allow the land to recover. Highway 88 is still closed and will be for the foreseeable future. Due to the terrain and the fire there is a serious danger of mudslides.

APS – Scott Jones

Scott let residents know that due to the high fire danger, power outages will be longer than normal. In normal circumstances, APS will attempt to remotely re-energize a power line 3 times prior to sending staff to view it. Due to the fire danger, if there is an outage an APS employee will go in person to view the area and determine if the line can be re-energized without causing sparks.

APS - Rustyn Sherer

Rustyn updated residents on the presence of a large Cat Generator at the battery power pack location. Due to the recent explosion of the battery pack in Phoenix, the battery pack in Tonto Basin has been de-

energized. The generator was brought in to supplement power to the community during the extreme heat of the summer. The generator will be used between 3 and 7 PM to make sure everyone has adequate electricity.

Gila County Sheriff's Department – Sgt. Don Engler

Sgt. Engler reported that in the prior 30 days the SO had received 120 calls in the Tonto Basin area, conducted 10 rescues, had 62 contacts on the lake, written one citation on the lake and spent 42 hours on the water. He further reported that a recent traffic stop in the area resulted in the arrest of 2 wanted individuals. He thanked the department and the Posse for their performance in the evacuation process of Roosevelt for the Woodbury Fire. A total of 863 residences were evacuated and each one was notified of the evacuation in person by either a deputy or a posse member. Sgt. Engler discussed the ARS statutes that govern the creek crossing when it is flooded. If an individual crosses the creek when the County has the barriers up it is at the Deputy's discretion as to whether or not they cite the person. He also let residents know that the SO has processes in place to get life sustaining supplies to residents in the event of emergency. Life sustaining consists of needed medications, food and potable water.

A resident asked Sgt. Engler if there would be additional deputies patrolling during the 4th of July weekend to prevent campers from shooting off fireworks. Sgt. Engler stated that he would have additional deputies as well as posse members patrolling.

Gila County Emergency Management – Michael O’Driscoll

Michael addressed a question a resident had about the proposed mobile home park and how it would impact the water supply for residents.

Michael stated that it is the responsibility of the water company to provide potable water to the residents they serve. However, if the resident has a private well and relies on that for water, they might have to contact a well driller to have the well deepened if it goes dry. All water wells in Arizona are under the management of ADEQ.